Other States Water Quality Criteria for Turbidity

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How the Turbidity Criteria Information was Collected

- For New England and New York we found the actual law/rule for turbidity for each state and consulted state web sites and officials as needed
- For the other states we used the EPA and Oregon turbidity summaries and consulted state web sites and officials as needed

New England States and New York

(Table 1)

- Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, and New Hampshire all have numeric turbidity criteria between 5 and 25 NTU
- Vermont's criteria are based on annual average turbidity under dry base-flow conditions
- Massachusetts, Maine, and New York have narrative criteria for turbidity
- Maine regulates construction runoff through the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Law
- New Hampshire's turbidity criteria for class A waters of 'none unless naturally occurring' is the most stringent for the Northeastern States

Other States

(Table 2)

- Many states have different numeric turbidity criteria for different water bodies or designated uses
- Ranges for numeric turbidity criteria are given in units of NTU or percent change from background
- Some state turbidity criteria are based on suspended sediment concentrations in units of mg/L
- A majority of states evaluate turbidity in terms of increase relative to background levels using absolute increase (not greater than 10 NTU above background) or relative increase (10 percent above background)

Other States Continued

(Table 2)

- The magnitude of allowable excursion from background ranges from 1 to 50 NTU and 2 to 20 percent
- The higher criteria (>50 NTU) typically correspond to either acute, "not to exceed" thresholds or to coastal or large river environments
- A few states define the frequency and duration of allowable excursions
- Having different criteria for acute and chronic exposures is the most common approach to regulating turbidity based on frequency of exposure